

## Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4864

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 404

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC (SMITH, HUNTER)

SUBJ: KIDNAPPED AMERICANS: POSSIBLE VENUES FOR NEGOTIATION

REF: DAR 1945

1. PENDING WORD FROM PRP, WHICH CAN BE DECISIVE IF PRP VIEW IS FIRM WE CAN DO NOTHING MORE THAN SPECULATE AND RUMINATE AS TO WHERE NEGOTIATIONS MAY TAKE PLACE. WE ASSUME THAT PRP PREFERENCES WILL BE LARGELY CONTROLLING, SINCE WE CAN SAFELY GO MANY PLACES MORE THAN THEY, AND SINCE THEY HOLD CAPTIVES. HOWEVER WE CERTAINLY CONSIDER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS THIS SUBJECT USEFUL BEGINNING NOW, TO HELP UNDERSTAND LIMITS OF POSSIBILITIES.

2. WE ALSO THINK THAT BURUNDI, KIGOMA, OR AN ON-LAKE RENDEZVOUS ARE THE MOST LIKELY PRP CHOICES, WITH ANY PART OF ZAIRE QUITE DOUBTFUL AND WITH ONLY A REMOTE CHANCE THAT PRP WOULD HAVE CAPABILITY OF SURFACING QUALIFIED NEGOTIATING TEAM IN MORE DISTANT LOCATION SUCH AS DAR OR LUSAKA. FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMMENTS OF EACH OF MAIN POSSIBILITIES.

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3. REFTTEL EFFECTIVELY SUMMARIZES MAJOR PROBLEMS REGARDING USE

OF KIGOMA, TO WHICH WE WOULD ADD PRESENCE OF SUBSTANTIAL GOZ INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES. UNTIL AND UNLESS THERE IS MAJOR SHIFT IN TANGOV POSITION, TANGOV WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY POSE INSURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLES NOTWITHSTANDING HELPFULNESS OF CERTAIN LOCAL OFFICIALS. ANOTHER PROBLEM WE SEE WITH KIGOMA IS LACK OF SECURE COMMUNICATION EXCEPT FOR CODE SYSTEM NOW USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH SSB. WE ALSO SHARE RESERVATIONS EXPRESSED RE MARROW RESIDENCE.

4. VARIOUS PERMUTATIONS ON OFF-SHORE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS WERE DISCUSSED DURING OUR KIGOMA STAY AND WE THINK THEY STILL PRESENT USEFUL POSSIBILITIES WORTH EXPLORING IF PRP SHOWS ANY INTEREST. ABSENCE OF SECURE COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY CAPABLE OF HANDLING VOLUME OF TRAFFIC WOULD OF COURSE POSE SAME PROBLEM AS IN ABOVE, AS WOULD NEED TO PROVIDE NECESSARY AND CREDIBLE ASSURANCES TO PRP REPRESENTATIVES WHENEVER THEY CROSSED LAKE OR MET ON IT, SINCE GOZ HAS SOME PATROL BOAT CAPABILITY ON LAKE.

5. WHILE POSSIBILITY APPEARS SMALL, WE DO NOT EXCLUDE CHANCE THAT PRP WILL AT LEAST INITIALLY PROPOSE MEETING SITE IN AREA THEY EFFECTIVELY CONTROL IN ZAIRE, WHERE THEY FEEL SECURE. AS AGAINST THIS, PRP WOULD SEE CERTAIN SECURITY RISKS FROM THEIR OWN POINT OF VIEW, AND AT LEAST WOULD PROBABLY RESENT SUCH A PROPOSAL. STILL WE THINK ADDRESSEES SHOULD NOT RPT NOT RULE OUT THIS OPTION.

6. PREVAILING VIEW HERE BELIEVE PRP WOULD BE CAPABLE OF SURFACING NEGOTIATING TEAM IN BUJUMBURA AND THAT THIS OR ANOTHER BURUNDI VENUE SUCH AS MINAGO OR RUMONGE FURTHER DOWN LAKE MIGHT PRESENT FEWER PROBLEMS FROM PRP POINT OF VIEW THAN WOULD TANZANIAN LOCATION. THE THEORY HERE IS THAT, IN ADDITION TO THE CROSS-LAKE ROUTE, WHICH PRESENTS CERTAIN HAZARDS RE EITHER TANZANIA OR BURUNDI, THERE IS ADDITIONAL LAND ROUTE BY WHICH PRP REPRESENTATIVES COULD (AND REPORTEDLY DO) COME AND GO. FROM OUR VIEWPOINT, EVEN IF ONE OF VILLAGES ON LAKE WERE SELECTED, WE WOULD BE NO MORE THAN 2 HOURS BY ROAD FROM SECURE COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES. FINALLY, AS THINGS STAND NOW, BURUNDI SEEMS TO REPRESENT MUCH MORE NEUTRAL TERRITORY THAN TANZANIA, AND GRB IS WILLING TO PROVIDE VENUE, IF TANGOV AND GOZ DO NOT RPT NOT OBJECT, AS THEY PRESUMABLY WILL NOT RPT NOT.

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7. IN ANY EVENT STEINER, AND MACFARLANE IF NEEDED, ARE PREPARED TO MOVE ON VERY SHORT NOTICE TO KIGOMA OR OTHER LOCATION. MARK

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## Message Attributes

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